DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 112 455 95 EA 007 471

AUTHOR Schofield, Dee
TITLE Community Involvement in Educational Governance. [NAESP] School Leadership Digest Second Series, Number 2. [ERIC/CEM Research Analysis Series, Number 17].
INSTITUTION National Association of Elementary School Principals, Washington, D.C.; Oregon Univ., Eugene. ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management.
SPONS AGENCY National Inst. of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE 75
CONTRACT OEC-0-8-080353-3514
NOTE 31p.
AVAILABLE FROM National Association of Elementary School Principals, 1801 North Moore Street, Arlington, Virginia 22209 ($2.50, single copy; $25.00 plus postage and handling, complete series of 12 issues)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.76 HC-$1.95 Plus Postage
DESCRIPTORS Centralization; Citizen Participation; *Community Involvement; Consumer Economics; *Educational Administration; Educational Change; Educational Innovation; Educational Philosophy; *Educational Policy; Elementary Secondary Education; *Governance; *Literature Reviews; Organizational Change; Political Power; Power Structure; Professional Personnel

ABSTRACT

The intent of this paper is to come to terms with some of the philosophical issues raised by community involvement in the education power structure. The literature reviewed identifies some of the underlying assumptions and explores some implications of increased citizen involvement for both educators and the society they serve. Two modes of thought emerge in the literature on community involvement: the democratic ideal that citizens should have control over the governmental institutions they create, and the contradictory view that the experts (educators) should have control over policy. The complex nature of the issues, as viewed by professional educators and community involvement advocates, is developed in the report. (Author/MLF)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

ED124555

Second Series,
Number 2.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP DIGEST

Community Involvement in Educational Governance

Dee Schofield

EA 007 471

Prepared by
ERIC Clearinghouse on
Educational Management

Published by
National Association of
Elementary School Principals

Library of Congress Catalog Number: 75-18250
NAESP School Leadership Digest Second Series, Number Two
ERIC/CEM Accession Number: EA 007 471
ERIC/CEM Research Analysis Series, Number Seventeen

Printed in the United States of America, 1975
National Association of Elementary School Principals
1801 North Moore Street
Arlington, Virginia 22209

Additional copies are available from NAESP for $2.50.

The material in this publication was prepared pursuant to a contract with the National Institute of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Contractors undertaking such projects under government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their judgment in professional and technical matters. Prior to publication, the manuscript was submitted to the National Association of Elementary School Principals for critical review and determination of professional competence. This publication has met such standards. Points of view or opinions, however, do not necessarily represent the official view or opinions of either the National Association of Elementary School Principals or the National Institute of Education.

CONTENTS

Foreword	v
Introduction	1
Populism, Professionalism, and Power	4
Arguments for Citizen Participation	7
Reform and Innovation through Community Involvement	7
Attack on Centralization	9
The Rise of Consumerism	13
Arguments for Professional Control	16
Tolerance for Different, Minority Views	16
Efficiency and Efficacy	17
The Impracticality of Populism	18
Conclusion	21
Bibliography	23

The Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) is a national information system operated by the National Institute of Education. ERIC serves the educational community by disseminating educational research results and other resource information that can be used in developing more effective educational programs.

The ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management, one of several clearinghouses in the system, was established at the University of Oregon in 1966. The Clearinghouse and its companion units process research reports and journal articles for announcement in ERIC's index and abstract bulletins.

Research reports are announced in *Resources in Education (RIE)*, available in many libraries and by subscription for $42.70 a year from the United States Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. Most of the documents listed in *RIE* can be purchased through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service, operated by Computer Microfilm International Corporation.

Journal articles are announced in *Current Index to Journals in Education. CIJE* is also available in many libraries and can be ordered for $50 a year from Macmillan Information, 216R Brown Street, Riverside, New Jersey 08075. Semiannual cumulations can be ordered separately.

Besides processing documents and journal articles, the Clearinghouse has another major function—information analysis and synthesis. The Clearinghouse prepares bibliographies, literature reviews, state-of-the-knowledge papers, and other interpretive research studies on topics in its educational area.

FOREWORD

Both the National Association of Elementary School Principals and the ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management are pleased to continue the *School Leadership Digest*, with a second series of reports designed to offer school leaders essential information on a wide range of critical concerns in education.

The *School Leadership Digest* is a series of monthly reports on top priority issues in education. At a time when decisions in education must be made on the basis of increasingly complex information, the *Digest* provides school administrators with concise, readable analyses of the most important trends in schools today, as well as points up the practical implications of major research findings.

By special cooperative arrangement, the series draws on the extensive research facilities and expertise of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management. The titles in the series were planned and developed cooperatively by both organizations. Utilizing the resources of the ERIC network, the Clearinghouse is responsible for researching the topics and preparing the copy for publication by NAESP.

The author of this report, Dee Schofield, is employed by the Clearinghouse as a research analyst and writer.

Paul L. Houts
Director of Publications
NAESP

Stuart C. Smith
Assistant Director and Editor
ERIC/CEM

INTRODUCTION

> "Power, power, power. It all points back to the same thing: that's power."
>
> A St. Louis community volunteer worker, testifying before the National Committee for Citizens in Education's Commission on Educational Governance.

Community involvement is as general a concept as any in the field of education. It can refer to everything from night sewing classes for housewives to the activities of pressure groups intent on exercising political control over the schools. The former instance is usually uncontroversial, whereas the latter frequently arouses deep conflict within the school and the community as a whole. Sometimes even the whole country can become involved in the issues raised by education pressure groups (witness the busing controversies plaguing Boston and other American cities).

The intent of this paper is to come to terms with some of the philosophical issues raised by community involvement in the education power structure, since it is questions of power—who has it, how it should be exercised—that form the crux of many school-community conflicts. And in light of the current trend toward local control of government and human services, community political involvement in the schools promises to be an increasingly major factor in the definition of education.

In this context, the term *political* refers to the whole spectrum of social interaction relating to decision-making and policy-formation. Man is as much a political animal as he/she is a social animal. The two qualities are inextricable. And the community is a major expression of these social and political propensities, as is the education system itself. Although Americans have certain prejudices against "politics" and a certain mistrust of decision-makers, it is important to realize that the desire for political power is not inherently evil.

'7

It is equally important to avoid the pitfall of assuming that an apolitical environment is optimum, or even achievable, an assumption made by education reformers in the early twentieth century. Taking political power away from official governmental structures means giving it to other groups. Removal of control of the schools from the party bosses meant awarding that control to the professional educators, a development that some have come to regard as hardly beneficial to education.

The past decade has witnessed a shift from federal to local dominance of the schools. Although the federal courts still play an important role in policy-making for local school districts, the dominant role played by federal institutions in the Kennedy and Johnson years has been balanced by increased local control. Even though many of the War on Poverty education programs were implemented by local citizens, the policies that informed these programs (such as Head Start) originated in Washington, as Zelman and Grainer point out. Now policy initiation (as well as implementation) is increasingly a function of local governmental units. No longer do liberals (or, of course, conservatives) believe that the initiation of education policy should rest with the federal government, partly because the advantages of centralized control have not been fully realized, and partly because Americans are now more aware of the liabilities of big government (inefficiency, disregard for individual differences, and so forth).

In addition to the trend toward local control, other factors have affected the degree and kind of community involvement in the education power structure. While unionization has sometimes tended to work against increased citizen control of the schools, the emergence of consumerism and consumer advocacy on the part of organizations like the National Committee for Citizens in Education has encouraged citizen involvement. And educators have in some instances supported increased citizen involvement through citizen advisory committees, as well as through numerous and various community education programs.

Each of these expressions of community involvement

deserves a separate paper; the amount of literature on these topics has increased in the last few years as awareness of the school-community relationship grows. However, the purpose of this paper is not to examine the specifics of community involvement as isolated phenomena, but rather to identify some of the underlying assumptions and to explore some implications of increased citizen involvement both for educators and for the society they serve.

POPULISM, PROFESSIONALISM, AND POWER

Two deeply ingrained (and essentially contradictory) modes of thought emerge in the literature on community involvement. Both are characteristically American, and both have plagued the history of American education for decades. The first is the democratic ideal that implies that "the people" should have control over the governmental institutions they create. According to this position, the more citizen participation, the better. The second is the belief in expertise. The professionals who have devoted their careers to a particular discipline are better qualified than the "layman" to determine the course of the institutions of their profession.

That these two strains of thought exist side by side is attested to by Yin, Lucus, Szanton, and Spindler. In their study of community involvement, they found that while many citizens have concluded that education should be left to the "experts," citizens also believe that they should have a participatory role in determining school policy. Engel states that "these are two sides of the same coin." But he neglects to account for the basic contradiction between the two positions. It is impossible to maintain that the experts (educators) should have control over policy, while believing at the same time in the democratic principle of control by the majority, including the nonprofessionals (laymen).

Zeigler and Jennings note that not only do these two contradictory attitudes exist simultaneously in the minds of the general public, but that they pervade education administration theory as well.

> There is a schizophrenic nature to theories of educational administration. On one hand, there is the traditional deference toward the "will of the people" that is expected in a larger social milieu that is institutionally democratic. On the other hand, there is the overpowering force of professionalism, which by its nature asserts the right of the professional to tell the client the appropriate course of action.

These authors leave no doubt that conflict is bound to arise from this contradiction, stating that "professional relationships involve a substantial atmosphere of authority, producing inherent conflicting tendencies in a democratic society."

The basic conflict between populism and professionalism has led to confusion over definition of the schools. According to Zeigler and Jennings, even political scientists have yet to decide whether schools are "commonweal" organizations or "service" organizations. A commonweal organization serves "the public at large," and the public "is assumed to possess the means of controlling" the organization. Such representative bodies as city councils and legislatures are considered commonweal organizations. In contrast, a service organization, according to Blau and Scott, is intended to serve clients. They state that "the welfare of the client is presumed to be the chief concern of service organizations." The assumption underlying service organizations is that the clients are not capable of judging what is best for them, whereas the decision-makers are. Commonweal organizations fit the democratic mode, while service organizations fit the professional mode.

A related question in deciding which type of organization the schools are is that of defining the schools' clientele. As Zeigler and Jennings state, "the most direct clients of schools [the students], those who are the targets of professional skills, are presumed incompetent." Thus, in relation to its students, the school functions as a service organization, much as a hospital does in relation to its patients. However, it is obvious to most observers that the schools' clientele includes adults (parents, taxpayers) as well as children, since the school serves them either directly or indirectly. And because adults in our democratic society are assumed to be competent, responsible human beings capable of directing their own lives and controlling their government, the school can also be defined as a commonweal organization.

A large part of the difficulty in deciding which kind of organization the school is lies in its unique character. No analogous institution exists in American society. Comparisons

between the school and the hospital, or the school district and the legislature, are valid only up to a certain point. It is because of the ambiguous nature of American education, along with the underlying contradictory philosophies of populism and professionalism, that the schools are as much the focus of attention and controversy today as they were half a century ago.

ARGUMENTS FOR CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

An examination of the issues as community involvement proponents define them inevitably involves criticism of educators and their profession, just as arguments for professional control entail criticism of the populists. It should be understood that statement of the issues implies conflict between educators and laymen that isn't necessarily pervasive. The impression that the two groups are two warring camps is not accurate; as with all social (and political) interaction, simple dichotomization rarely completely describes the "real" situation.

The intent of this examination of the issues is not to encourage the interested parties to regard each other as enemies, but rather to encourage them to understand the complex nature of these issues. Both professional educators and community involvement advocates are concerned with improving the education system, though the most vocal critics of the status quo have been, in the last few years, the community involvement proponents.

Reform and Innovation through Community Involvement

One of the most vehemently stated arguments for community involvement in education declares that professional educators have defaulted on their responsibility to provide innovation and constructive change. Hence, the public-at-large must take over where professionals have failed, providing the improvement that many Americans have come to believe is essential if education is to accomplish its goals. According to this argument, the profession of education is (by definition) concerned primarily with maintenance of the status quo. Educators have sacrificed efficacy to protect their territory. The profession of education has become a closed system, inimical to innovation and, hence, to improvement.

Since the general public (the nonprofessionals) obviously does not share this kind of professional parochialism, it is, therefore, better able to constructively shape the course of education.

Bundy is one of the most vociferous proponents of deprofessionalization as a means of raising education quality. He notes the obvious—that educators "now exert a radical monopoly over learning." Monopolization by the professionals ("self-certifying elites") has led to a "bureaucratized and dehumanized" education system that perpetuates weaknesses and that allows for no far-reaching change. And Bundy, like most of the community involvement proponents, believes that radical change in education is a pressing necessity.

Addressing the issue of accountability, whereby educators are held explicitly responsible by the public for their actions and policies, Bundy maintains that it is unachievable. Professional educators will adopt the trappings of accountability without the substance, because this concept threatens their territory and their power base. As he states, "Accountability, therefore, despite the humanistic jargon about community and minority involvement, does not alter the professionals' deciding what needs to be learned in terms that professionals can meet."

Bundy implies that professional educators perpetrate on the public a kind of deception. The pros "are prepared to make many concessions to maintain control," utilizing the rhetoric of community involvement while never relinquishing power: "Any shift of management control from the profession to the community . . . would not, therefore, alter the function of the schools but merely change who executes some of the tasks of the schools." The dilution and ultimate dissolution of basic reform is thus abetted by educators who appear to embrace change while actually supporting the status quo. In such an environment, according to Bundy, innovation in American educational philosophy is impossible.

Commager makes much the same point, though he does not conceive of the difficulties in altering education as arising from some sort of professional conspiracy. He instead maintains

that to look to professional educators as the source of innovation is to look in the wrong place. Pointing out that "in the past most great educational statesmen were from outside academia," Commager implies that professional educators are technicians rather than theorists, practitioners rather than philosophers. To expect innovation to emanate from technicians is a fallacy; "if there is to be reform, it must come from society, not from the schools which are the instruments and mirrors of society."

Therefore, what is needed, according to Commager, is not an expanded education profession, but a coherent, comprehensive philosophy of education incorporating social (as opposed to professional) values. He states that "the need for reform . . . cannot be satisfied by professional educators, but cannot be satisfied without educational philosophers." And the incorporation of broad social values into educational philosophy obviously entails a much greater reliance on the general public for input, though Commager does not imply that every citizen will therefore become a philosopher.

Attack on Centralization

Community involvement advocates' criticism of the stifling nature of professional education is closely related to the centralization and attempted depoliticization of education, as several critics have pointed out. The reformers of 50 years ago made possible the consolidation of professional educators' power. Guthrie notes that prior to the reform movement, more than 100,000 school districts existed in the United States; "these were by far the most numerous units of government." These districts were considerably smaller than districts today, and they were subject to more direct local control. They were truly democratic units, incorporating proportionally many more community members in the school governmental process. As Guthrie points out, "It was quite possible for a district's trustees [representatives] to outnumber its teachers or perhaps even its pupils."

The problem with this decentralized, democratic system of

school governance lay in the abuses of power most commonly found at the turn of the century in the big cities. The ward-based political system (a very decentralized one) seemed to lend itself to "poor management and corruption," according to Guthrie.

Since the school district was as much a part of the political structure as city hall, it was also subject to the same reform pressures. But reform of education took on an additional dimension, as Zeigler and Jennings note. The reformers (many of whom were educators) regarded politics in general as "dirty" and concluded that it was essential to remove the schools from political contamination. The desire to depoliticize education stemmed in part from the still-prevalent attitude of "reverence" toward education as the means of achieving "the American Dream," according to Zeigler and Jennings. Education was a kind of sacred undertaking, unlike any other.

The result of education reform, then, was to remove control of the schools from the local politicians (and citizens) and to centralize and consolidate the power that they had previously wielded. Thus, small, formerly autonomous school districts were incorporated into citywide districts. The ratio of school trustees (elected representatives) to citizens therefore fell considerably. And the number of school districts has continued to diminish, until in 1972 there were only 15,780, as Zeigler and Jennings note.

Such centralization has made it much more difficult for elected representatives to keep up with the expanded functions of the large district. Zeigler and Jennings found in their study of school governance that the superintendent (a professional) has assumed increasingly greater control over district policy-making. The emergence of this key figure in school decision-making is the result not only of the increased size of the school district, but also of the desire to run the schools according to a "business model," as Guthrie calls it. Such a model is, theoretically, an apolitical one. Hence, education management has become an integral part of the education system, contributing in large part to the ascendancy of

professionals over laymen.

In accord with business management principles, the elected representatives on the school board function as "stockholders." "Once they [have] evolved broad 'corporate strategy,' school board members [are] not supposed to interfere in the running of schools," according to Guthrie. The power that used to reside with school trustees (laymen for the most part) now belongs to management, including primarily the superintendent. And this transfer of what is essentially political power took place under the assumption that the schools had been "politically sanitized," or depoliticized.

In addition to facilitating consolidation of the professionals' power, centralization has had other negative effects, according to community involvement proponents. Centralization has come to imply uniformity and standardization according to a set of rules (implicit and explicit) generated by the profession. A major operating premise of the schools has been to ensure order by "*creating and maintaining uniformity*," as Barth emphasizes. The result of such standardization has been frequently to overlook the needs of certain groups and individuals that do not fit the uniform plan. Hill points out that "services designed for a broad aggregate of clients necessarily meet modal or average needs, and ignore the diverse needs of special subsets of clients."

Not only does centralization and the resulting standardization mean the inability to accommodate diversity, but it also means that the professionals who run the centralized system are more inclined to attend "to the technical aspects of service delivery than to the changing or special needs of consumers," as Hill states. Hill's description of a centralized, standardized system in which the professionals inevitably control the output and make the decisions fits the definition of a service (as opposed to a commonweal) organization.

Community involvement proponents are unified in their attack on the negative effects of centralization. But some proponents fail to recognize the relationship between decentralization and politicization. A return to a decentralized education system in which citizen participation is expanded

means the reemergence of "politics" in school governance. And there are those in the ranks of community involvement advocates who still wish to keep the schools above politics, even though the impossibility of this attempt has become increasingly clear.

It is, perhaps, because education has become so standardized and uniform that it is tempting to draw analogies between education and industry. Since the professionals have adopted business management principles, and since so much money is tied up in education, why shouldn't the schools be regarded as any other form of business enterprise? And if education may be considered an industry, producing certain goods and services, shouldn't the recipients of those goods and services be considered consumers?

Some community involvement advocates argue that such an analogy is indeed valid, and that the paying customers of education (parents and taxpayers) therefore have the right to demand high quality products from the education system. Just as Ralph Nader's pressure on the auto industry brought about the development of new auto safety standards, so can consumer pressure on professional educators bring about much needed changes in education.

The recent emergence of this attitude is reflected in the increasing use of the term *consumer* in the literature on community involvement. And it is reflected in the creation of education consumer advocate groups, the most well-known of which is the National Committee for Citizens in Education.

The N.C.C.E. is modeled on Common Cause, the citizen advocate group that has been active in many areas of federal and congressional reform, and the group that in part received its impetus from the work of national consumer organizations such as Nader's. N.C.C.E.'s senior associate Carl Marburger regards community members (parents, taxpayers, and students alike) as the consumers of education, even though they have little say in how their schools are run. Jones quotes him as saying that "parents and citizens—and the ultimate consumers, students—are ending up at the bottom of the school decision-making scale." Although Marburger's group does not

wish to unduly antagonize professional educators, it does wish to incorporate previously uninvolved citizens (especially parents) in the education power structure.

N.C.C.E. is an issue-oriented organization, gathering and distributing information on "high-impact" issues such as student records availability, and making recommendations for improving citizen involvement, according to Jones. The recently compiled *Public Testimony on Public Schools*, collected from 187 parents, educators, and community workers, examines the roles of school boards and superintendents in relation to citizens. Its recommendations, as pointed out in the article "Your Power Is Coveted; Not Your Troubles," are geared to incorporating community members into the decision-making structures of the schools and to decentralizing these structures to make them more responsive to local needs.

For example, the N.C.C.E. suggests, on the basis of the testimony it collected, that the individual school is a more efficient and effective unit for school governance than the large district. It recommends that school "councils" operate at the building level "in many of the same ways that a 'regular' school board operates at the district level," according to the article mentioned above. In order to ensure that these councils function in accord with democratic principles, their members should be elected (rather than appointed by the central administration). These councils would have policy-making power in such areas as curriculum, budgeting, and personnel evaluation.

Obviously such recommendations would alter the traditional power structure of the school district. N.C.C.E.'s school councils would usurp some of the decision-making power of not only the building principal, but the central administration (including, certainly, the superintendent) as well. Although this organization does not wish to create conflicts with the education profession, such an approach seems calculated to raise the hackles of at least some educators, especially education administrators.

Potential conflicts aside, this group seems dedicated to making the schools true commonweal organizations, asserting

that the consumers must have ultimate control over the schools, which they have created in the first place. Because it is concerned in part, at least, with a redistribution of political power, the N.C.C.E. functions much like any special interest or lobbying group, just as does Common Cause. To apply these terms to a citizen-oriented organization may seem to some to be inaccurate and unfair because of the negative connotations of dirty politics and arm twisting associated with some pressure groups. But the adequate representation of subgroups within the society is a necessary element in a democratic system. With the importance currently assigned to pluralism, the evolution of groups such as the N.C.C.E. seems both logical and inevitable.

ARGUMENTS FOR PROFESSIONAL CONTROL

Given the premium currently placed on citizen involvement in education, extolling the virtues and advantages of professional control goes against the tide. Much of the literature (generated both by nonprofessionals and by professional educators themselves) is oriented in the opposite direction. Nevertheless, there are convincing arguments to be made for professional control, which, according to some, does not necessarily mean mere maintenance of the status quo.

Indeed, one of the arguments for professional direction holds that true innovation in education can originate only within the ranks of professional educators, those who are best acquainted with both the theory and practice of education. A related argument notes that professionals are much more receptive to new (perhaps even radical) ideas and more tolerant of different approaches than is the uninformed layman. And, finally, advocates of professional control point to the previous failures of populism to provide effective, efficient education—the major purpose of the schools. Ultimately, according to this argument, control of the schools ends up in the hands of a relatively few individuals anyway, since sustained, consistent popular involvement is not feasible.

Tolerance for Different, Minority Views

The notion that popular control within a small community setting is inimical to political and intellectual tolerance is hardly new. As Altshuler points out, such political philosophers as Madison, Tocqueville, and Richard Hofstadter have concluded that "small community size and populistic democracy are both antagonistic to the toleration of political and intellectual competition." The frequently destructive lack of tolerance manifest in such small, locally controlled communities as Salem, Massachusetts, where "witches" were burned,

and towns in the South, where blacks were systematically terrorized, has led American political philosophers to take a closer look at democracy.

Especially during the McCarthy era, in which demagoguery in the name of democracy held the country in its sway, ardent supporters of democracy reevaluated their unqualified support of populism, as May points out. Such political scientists as Seymour Martin Lipset and Robert Dahl have offered eloquent support for popular democracy in contrast with more authoritarian forms of government. However, when their attention shifted to the implementation and maintenance of civil liberties within a democracy, they emphasized the importance of responsible leadership, as May states. The role of the responsible leader is to curb the destructive tendencies of the majority, not to literally represent and implement those tendencies.

In education, according to professional control proponents, the role of responsible leader is filled by the professional educator, who is somewhat removed from the pressures of popular demands and who, therefore, can avoid the intolerance that the majority frequently holds for minorities. For example, the obstructionists who refused to go along with court-ordered desegregation for the most part did not come from the ranks of professional educators. The professionals have, generally speaking, been concerned with guaranteeing equal educational opportunity for all children, sometimes in the face of strong opposition from the communities they serve.

Efficiency and Efficacy

Not only does professional control of education lead to tolerance of minority viewpoints, but it also allows for the consistent, efficient operation of the system, according to some proponents. That a system of education is necessary is well established. Education cannot be a random undertaking. The very size and scope of public education in America dictate that organization is essential for the orderly and equitable distribution of money and services. Proponents of

professional control maintain that professional educators are best qualified to provide this kind of order, since their training has prepared them to operate efficiently. Laymen do not possess the skills to run such a system effectively.

Albert Shanker, president of the American Federation of Teachers, has pointed out the impracticality of leaving the administration of education to laymen. He maintains that increasing the decision-making power of parents and other citizens would operate to the detriment of the schools. Jones quotes Shanker as saying that "when you encourage large groups of citizens to participate [in school governance], then the whole function of education can no longer proceed, just as a hospital couldn't function if everyone in the community decided to come in and participate, to advise the doctors what to do, to advise the nurses what to do."

Shanker emphasizes the importance of insulating professional educators from the interference of uninformed laymen. Only under semi-isolated conditions can the professionals accomplish what they are trained to do—provide effective, efficient education. Shanker implicitly defines education as a service organization. He also suggests that professional educators fill a very real need that cannot be filled by non-professionals. Without educators' guidance, the schools could not accomplish their goals.

The Impracticality of Populism

Finally, proponents of professional control point out that broad, populist participation in decision-making looks fine on paper, but is not achievable over the long run. The problem of apathy that has always plagued the American democratic system also plagues attempts to incorporate a wide variety and number of citizens into governmental processes. Such apathy has not, in the past, always worked to the disadvantage of the schools, however. As Piele and Hall note, the absence of conflict (and hence, the presence of apathy) means more support for the schools (especially in the form of successful budget elections). The implication is clear: peace and apathy

(uninvolvement) go hand-in-hand, just as conflict and involvement seem to coincide. And not many educators (or citizens) believe that conflict is particularly desirable.

Peterson points out that "for most people political participation is a costly, time and energy consuming activity that they would, for the most part, like to avoid." Thus, those who end up participating in school governance (including citizens' advisory councils) are somewhat of a select group—those who have specific interests and the inclination to further those interests. Zeigler and Jennings found that such a selection process operates in determining candidates for school boards.

The results of apathy and of this selection process are twofold. First, those citizens who do not directly participate in governmental processes reap the benefits of the services of those who do participate. Peterson refers to those not involved as "free riders." In the case of the schools, institutions that provide "collective benefits," a relatively small number of citizens have enough interest to become involved in influencing the power structure. The rest of the community receives the collective benefits of education without putting out the effort to make those benefits possible or to determine their final form.

Second, because community representatives lack broad, consistent support from their constituency, their ability to adequately (or even accurately) represent the desires of the community is severely limited. Instead, they find themselves reliant on the very groups (school administration, state education agencies) that they wish to have a share in controlling. Peterson points out that it is not simply that professional educators desire to assume ultimate control over citizen groups, but that those groups themselves become "dependent upon the administrative agency that . . . many school reformers say they are supposed to influence."

Unlike Bundy's, Peterson's critique does not imply any kind of conspiracy on the part of professional educators, but rather indicates the unworkable nature of populism in school governance. He suggests that the ideal of all community

members participating equally and eagerly in the education power structure is unrealistic and unachievable, given the apathetic tendencies of so many citizens.

CONCLUSION

In spite of the manner in which the pros and cons are presented in this paper, it is fallacious to deal in absolutes, except for purposes of analysis. As mentioned above, the proponents of citizen involvement and the advocates of professional control do not constitute two warring camps. Indeed, they share many of the same values and intentions. For the most part they all perceive weaknesses in the existing system of education and desire to improve that system. But nonetheless, tension between the two underlying, basically irreconcilable philosophies of populism and professionalism still exists; it remains deeply embedded in American thought. Thus, it would seem that this tension that has plagued American education for so long will not be easily or immediately resolved.

Educators and citizens alike should be aware of the complex nature of the issues of citizen involvement and should avoid oversimplification. The fact that a fundamental redistribution of power is involved in increased citizen participation should not be glossed over. Educators must not be naive about the implications of such participation, though the literature indicates that some are. The notion that education is by and for everyone, a notion implicit in much of the literature on community education, for example, is an attractive one, appealing to the reader's democratic biases. But the fact that such an assertion calls into question the position of the professional educator is rarely dealt with explicitly.

The rhetoric of sharing, employed in such publications as the *Community Education Journal,* indicates that everyone will come together and participate equally and enthusiastically in education. However, the thinking that underlies this community-spirit rhetoric ignores the fact that a citizen's investment of time and energy usually entails a desire for political (decision-making) power. As more citizens work with the schools, the greater their interest in education issues

becomes, and the greater their awareness of the shortcomings of the education system becomes. It is unrealistic of some community involvement proponents to expect citizens to participate only in relatively trivial matters when they gain insight into the politics of education.

Admonitions aside, it is encouraging to think that increased citizen involvement in education decision-making could in part lead to the demise of the negative attitude toward politics. In a democratic system predicated on general political participation, such an attitude is essentially destructive and can bring about the ascendancy of a relatively small, unrepresentative group over the majority. For most Americans, this state of affairs can hardly be considered desirable. Perhaps community involvement in the education political structure will produce better-informed citizens more aware of the dynamics of the education process, as well as of the democratic process. Perhaps everyone eventually involved in education governance (citizens as well as educators) can learn from the experience not to scorn or to look down on our governmental processes—the political processes whereby we shape the destiny of not only our institutions but of ourselves as well.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Many of the items listed in this bibliography are indexed in ERIC's monthly catalogs *Resources in Education (RIE)* and *Current Index to Journals in Education (CIJE).* Reports in *RIE* are indicated by an "ED" number; journal articles in *CIJE* are indicated by an "EJ" number.

Copies of most ERIC reports, but not journal articles, can be ordered from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service. If a report is available from EDRS, its order number and prices are given. When ordering, please specify the "ED" number. Unless otherwise noted, reports are available in both microfiche (MF) and paper copy (HC). Please include check or money order payable to EDRS.

Postage must be added to the cost of all orders. Rates are as follows. Microfiche: $0.20 for up to 60 fiche and $0.09 for each additional 60. Paper copy: $0.20 for first 60 pages and $0.09 for each additional 60.

Address requests to EDRS, P.O. Box 190, Arlington, Virginia 22210.

Abbott, Jerry L. "How To Promote Community Involvement." *National Elementary Principal,* 54, 5 (May/June 1975), pp. 51-55. EJ number not yet assigned.

Adams, Velma A. "Taxpayers Out to Change the Schools." *School Management,* 18, 6 (June/July 1974), pp. 22-26. EJ 099 420.

Altshuler, Alan A. *Community Control: The Black Demand for Participation in Large American Cities.* New York: Western Publishing Company, 1970.

Barth, Roland S. "Is There a Way Out?" *National Elementary Principal,* 53, 3 (March/April 1974), pp. 12-18. EJ 096 020.

Blau, Peter M., and Scott, W. Richard. *Formal Organizations.* San Francisco: Chandler, 1962.

Bundy, Robert F. "Accountability: A New Disneyland Fantasy." *Phi Delta Kappan,* 56, 3 (November 1974), pp. 176-180. EJ 105 851.

Commager, Henry Steele. "Public Responsibility and the Educational Enterprise." *National Elementary Principal,* 54, 5 (May/June 1975), pp. 6-15. EJ number not yet assigned.

Davies, Don. "The People Want a Seat at the Bargaining Table." *Compact,* 9, 1 (February 1975), pp. 5-6. EJ 112 406.

Engel, Martin. "Politics and Prerequisites in Educational Change." *Phi Delta Kappan,* 55, 7 (March 1974), pp. 457-459. EJ 092 763.

Fantini, Mario D. "The School-Community Power Struggle." *National Elementary Principal*, 54, 3 (January/February 1975), pp. 57-61. EJ 112 403.

Gallagher, Paul E. *Playgrounds: An Experiment in Citizen Participation. A Report.* Brockton, Massachusetts: Old Colony Planning Council, 1971. 66 pages. ED 087 116 MF $0.76 HC $1.95.

Guthrie, James W. "Public Control of Public Schools: Can We Get It Back?" *Public Affairs Report, Volume 15, Number 3.* Berkeley: Institute of Governmental Studies, University of California, 1974. 7 pages. ED 100 025 MF $0.76 HC $1.58. (Also available from Editor, Institute of Governmental Studies, 109 Bernard Moses Hall, University of California, Berkeley, California 94720. No charge.)

Hamlin, Herbert M. "How To Develop Citizen Participation in Local School Policymaking." *Updating School Board Policies*, 4, 7-8 (July-August 1973), pp. 2-4, 9-10. EJ 085 927.

Hill, Paul T. "Research on Goals as a Means of Establishing Policy Agendas for That Public Service Called Education." Paper presented at American Educational Research Association annual meeting, Chicago, April 1974. 28 pages. ED 089 415 MF $0.76 HC $1.95.

Jackson, Ronald; Budde, Ray; Donnelly, Julie; and Fitzgerald, Joan. *A Plan for Advancing Quality and Excellence by the Organization and Management of Public Education. A Report and Recommendations.* Boston: Massachusetts Advisory Council on Education, 1974. 204 pages. ED 098 694 MF $0.76 HC $10.78.

Jones, Philip G. "An Uncommonly Earnest Citizen Group Is Trying Hard to Become the Common Cause of Education." *The American School Board Journal*, 162, 3 (March 1975), pp. 41-46. EJ 112 496.

Jordan, Wayne N. *The School and Community: Partners in Education. [A Way To Determine Needs and Set Goals.] Second Edition.* Fresno, California: Fresno County Department of Education, 1973. 53 pages. ED 099 960 MF $0.76 HC $3.32.

Litwak, Eugene. "Linking School and Community." *National Elementary Principal*, 54, 5 (May/June 1975), pp. 35-40. EJ number not yet assigned.

Mann, Dale. "Public Understanding and Education Decision-Making." *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 10, 2 (Spring 1974), pp. 1-18. EJ 100 933.

May, Judith. "Citizen Involvement in Urban Affairs." Unpublished

paper. Berkeley: Department of Political Science, University of California, 1968.

Oldham, Neild B. *Citizens Advisory Committees. Public Participation Increases; Guides Change in American Education. Current Trends in School Policies and Programs.* Arlington, Virginia: National School Public Relations Association, 1973. 56 pages. ED 091 853 MF $0.76 HC not available from EDRS. (Available from National School Public Relations Association, 1801 North Moore Street, Arlington, Virginia 22209. Stock No. 411-13007, $6.75; payment must accompany orders.)

Oliver, Donald W. "Recapturing Community." *National Elementary Principal,* 54, 5 (May/June 1975), pp. 56-63. EJ number not yet assigned.

Peterson, Paul E. "Community Representation and the 'Free Rider'." *Administrator's Notebook,* 22, 8 (April 1974), pp. 1-4. EJ 102 562.

Piele, Philip K., and Hall, John Stuart. *Voting in School Financial Elections: Some Partial Theories.* Eugene: ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management, University of Oregon, 1973. 63 pages. ED 082 282 MF $0.76 HC $3.32.

Sandow, Stuart, and Apker, Wesley, eds. *The Politics of Education: Challenges to State Board Leadership.* Bloomington, Indiana: Phi Delta Kappa, 1975. 94 pages. ED number not yet assigned. Document not available from EDRS. (Available from Phi Delta Kappa, Eighth and Union, Bloomington, Indiana 47401. $3.50.)

Weinstein, Shelly, and Mitchell, Douglas E. "In Education Policy Making, Nearly Everyone Is Frustrated." *Compact,* 9, 1 (February 1975), pp. 2-4. EJ 112 405.

Yin, Robert K.; Lucus, William A.; Szanton, Peter L.; and Spindler, J. Andrew. *Citizen Organization: Increasing Client Control over Services.* Santa Monica, California: Rand Corporation, 1973.

"Your Power Is Coveted; Not Your Troubles." *The American School Board Journal,* 162, 7 (July 1975), pp. 13-15. EJ number not yet assigned.

Zeigler, L. Harmon, and Jennings M. Kent. *Governing American Schools. Political Interaction in Local School Districts.* North Scituate, Massachusetts: Duxbury Press, 1974.

Zelman, Susan, and Grainer, Marc. "An Evaluation of Citizen Participation in an Urban School." Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association annual meeting, Chicago, April 1974. 39 pages. ED 091 806 MF $0.76 HC $1.95.